

An evaluation of the HIV risk screening and enrollment process in Mexico's pre-exposure prophylaxis demonstration project—the ImPrEP study

Heleen Vermandere¹, Gisela Martínez Silva, Santiago Aguilera-Mijares¹, Araczy Martínez-Dávalos, Sergio Bautista-Arredondo¹
¹Department of Health Economics and Health Systems Innovations, National Institute of Public Health, Mexico

Background

ImPrEP - Demonstration project that offered pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to adult men who have sex with men (MSM) and transwomen (TW) at high HIV risk in Brazil, Peru and México.

In Mexico:

- 2018-2021
- One public HIV clinic and three AIDS Services Organizations
- Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Puerto Vallarta

Study's goal:

To describe the enrollment outcomes of people who were screened and to compare each group's characteristics.

Methods

Screening and enrollment

Enrollment outcomes

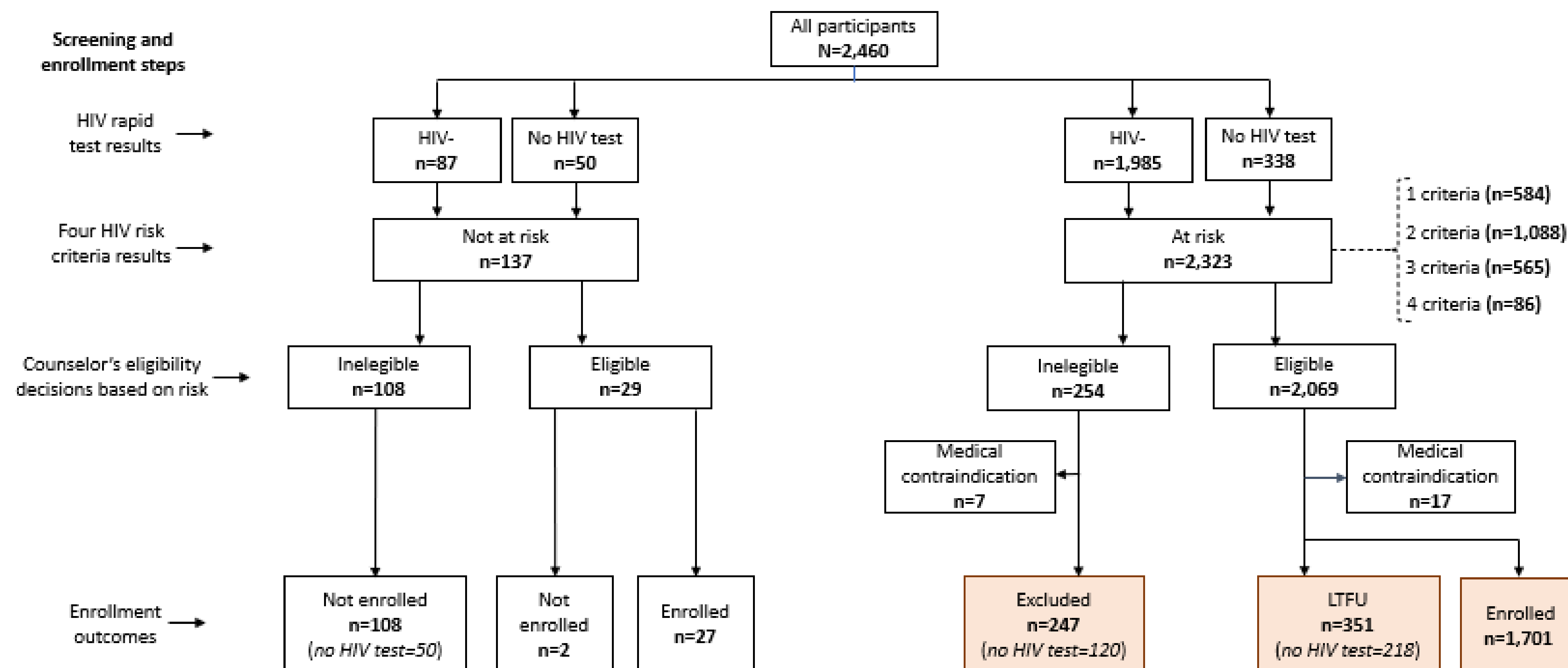
Analysis

- **Rapid HIV test:** HIV-negativity was a requisite
 - **Self-administered study questionnaire*:**
 - sociodemographics,
 - attendance reason,
 - 4 risk criteria (4-RC)** provided HIV risk eligibility per protocol
 - additional risk criteria
 - **Counseling evaluation:** additional per-case confirmation of HIV risk
 - **Clinical screening:** medical evaluation for participants with confirmed risk
1. **Enrolled:** received PrEP
 2. **Excluded:** not enrolled; deemed eligible by 4-RC but ineligible by counselor
 3. **Lost to follow-up (LTFU):** not enrolled; deemed eligible by 4-RC and counselor
- Flowchart describing the screening and enrollment steps
 - Multivariate logistic models to identify factors associated with being excluded or LTFU compared to being enrolled (including variables significant at bivariate level)
 - Discussions with the project's staff to obtain feedback on the results

* The questionnaire was implemented for the purpose of this study

**4-RC: reporting in the last 6 months 1) condomless anal sex with a male or transgender partner; 2) anal sex with a person living with HIV; 3) sexually transmitted infection diagnoses; and 4) transactional sex

Results - Description of the enrollment process



Results - Comparing excluded and LTFU with enrolled

Variables	Excluded (n=1,910) aOR	Lost-to-follow-up (n=2,004) aOR	Variables (cont.)		
Age (≤25 years)			Anal sex with person living with HIV (no)		
>25 years		↓ 0.744*	Yes/I don't know		0.813
Sexual identity (men who have sex with men)			Sexually transmitted infection diagnosis (no)		
Transwomen		↑ 4.400***	Yes/I don't know	↓ 0.384***	↓ 0.754*
Education (<high school or technical career)			Transactional sex (no)		
Bachelor's degree or higher		0.897	Yes/I don't know	↓ 0.290***	
Screening site (AIDS Service Organization)			Male sex partners number (0-5)		
HIV clinic		↑ 2.490***	>5	↓ 0.641***	↓ 0.527***
Main reason for attending site (HIV/other sexually transmitted infection testing)			Non-injectable drug use (no)		
Seeking PrEP	↓ 0.695***	↓ 0.323***	Yes	0.847	0.935
Condomless anal sex (no)			Post-exposure prophylaxis use frequency (never)		
Yes/I don't know	↓ 0.167***	↓ 0.681*	≥1 time	↓ 0.625*	↓ 0.488***
			Ever considered stopping condom use (no)		
			Yes	↓ 0.397***	↓ 0.668***

Conclusions

- Counselors excluded 247 people who had reported at least one of the 4 ImPrEP HIV risk criteria, yet these participants did report less other risk factors compared with enrolled ones. It might be important in the future to ask these people to come back to follow-up on their risk behavior.
- Similarly, LTFU participants were less likely than enrolled ones to present other risk factors. Loss of follow-up was more common among younger participants, among TW compared with HSH, and among the public HIV clinic (versus AIDS services organizations).
- PrEP programs may promote enrollment of persons at risk by employing screening tools coupled with counselor's assessments that refine the eligibility decision, in addition to strategies that diminish access barriers for those with higher vulnerability.